



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

MAY 27 2005

THE ADMINISTRATOR

The Honorable Rick Perry
Governor of Texas
P.O. Box 12428
Austin, Texas 78711

Dear Governor Perry:

Thank you for your letter of February 28, 2005, in which you expressed your concerns about the potential air pollution impacts from the entry of Mexican trucks into the United States. I very much appreciate your interest in partnering with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to monitor cross-border commercial truck emissions and to identify innovative solutions to any related problems.

EPA is committed to a policy of harmonizing more protective environmental standards among the three North American Free Trade Agreement signatories. We believe the adoption by Mexico of U.S. truck emission standards and U.S. fuel standards is the most beneficial way to help address border emissions from trucks. While we have cause to believe that the Mexican government will approve these stricter standards, their implementation could lag behind the U.S. by one or more years. Thus, interim actions that the State of Texas and EPA can take together could be very helpful.

In an effort to demonstrate the effectiveness and importance of reducing diesel emissions to our Mexican partners, EPA is sponsoring several initiatives. First, EPA is sponsoring a diesel retrofit project in Mexico City. In this project, buses are operating now with advanced exhaust emission controls and ultra-low sulfur diesel fuel. This serves as a demonstration project for the Mexican government of the benefits of advanced diesel emission controls and clean fuel. Second, our EPA Regional Office in Dallas has provided funding for retrofitting school buses in the Laredo Independent School District to burn ultra-low sulfur diesel fuel and supplying such fuel. In addition to reducing pollution risks to American children, this effort serves as a demonstration to Mexican officials in the border zone.

As you mentioned in your letter, EPA is supporting a new pilot project now beginning on the border between Nogales, Arizona and Mexico. EPA, along with the Mexican government, the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality and Environmental Systems Products, launched this project on March 10, 2005. This pilot project will assess the capabilities of emission testing technologies such as remote

sensing, opacimeters and portable emission monitoring systems for characterizing in-use emissions and for identifying gross emitters crossing from Mexico. The outcome of this project will be important to all states that receive significant Mexican truck traffic. Additionally, EPA is also involved in a project south of San Diego, California, where the Air Resources Board (CARB) is conducting an analysis of the truck fleet that routinely crosses the California-Baja border.

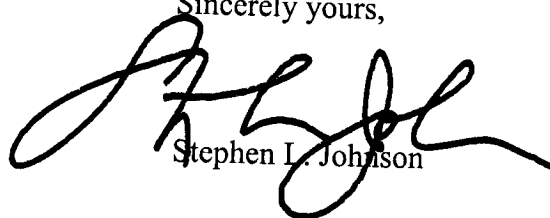
Of particular interest, our Dallas office is in the initial stages of planning a study employing remote sensing techniques to quantify pollution from idling trucks on international bridges in the El Paso-Ciudad Juarez area. This project will enable a full assessment of the impacts from such trucks and provide valuable information about how such emissions can be mitigated while encouraging the smooth flow of commercial traffic.

Finally, to facilitate projects including those to reduce diesel emissions from Mexican trucks, our Dallas office has issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) for up to \$1.5 million to state, local, and tribal governmental agencies. That RFP has been shared with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), and we would look forward to working with TCEQ on related projects.

With all these efforts underway, I am confident that the State of Texas and EPA can work cooperatively to successfully address the challenge that increased Mexican diesel truck traffic will bring. Our staff in the Dallas EPA office have been in contact with TCEQ staff about these efforts, and they look forward to working with TCEQ Commissioners and senior management on a comprehensive plan to address these and other U.S.-Mexico border environmental problems.

Again, thank you for your letter. Please do not hesitate to contact me or Andrew Hanson in our Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Relations at (202) 564-3664 if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely yours,



Stephen L. Johnson